JUSTICE LEAGUE®

TASK FORCE™

36 JUL 96

PRIEST
BERNADO
NAPOLITANO

GODWAR!

PRESSURE.

IT'S THE ONLY THING ON TRIUMPH'S MIND.

BAROMETRIC PRESSURE DEFINING ALTITUDE.

VELOCITY AS APPLIED THRUST DIVIDED BY GRAVITATIONAL FORCE.

ALTITUDE AND VELOCITY.

THE ONLY THINGS ON TRIUMPH'S MIND.

THIS IS A *MINUTEMAN III* INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE. IT WAS BUILT BY THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE FOR LONG-RANGE DELIVERY OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

IT HAS BEEN LAUNCHED BY A WIZARD FROM A FARMING VILLAGE TO WIPE OUT AN ARMY OF *HORSEMEN.*

OKAY, *HORSEMEN* WITH *SWORDS.*

...THRUST... VELOCITY... PRESSURE...

BEEN SO LONG... THINK... THINK... THINK...

...HOW DO THESE THINGS *WORK--?!?*

LAST TIME I EVEN *THOUGHT* ABOUT ICBM'S WAS *POLITICAL SCIENCE* CLASS--EVALUATING THEIR DETERRENT VALUE WHILE TRYING NOT TO *DOZE OFF.*

THINK-- A ROCKET--IS A *REENTRY* VEHICLE-- IT GOES *UP,* INTO THE OUTOSPHERE--

--THEN SHUTS DOWN ITS *ENGINES*-- *DROPS*--

--AND LANDS WITH A *BANG.*

ONCE IT REACHES A PRESET *ALTITUDE* AND *SPEED,* IT'LL SINK LIKE A STONE--

--AND KILL *THOUSANDS* OF PEOPLE.

THAT IS, UNLESS--

-- I CAN FOOL IT INTO MAL-FUNCTIONING!

THE GUIDANCE SYSTEM *HAS* TO BE LINKED TO SOME KIND OF *BAROMETER*--MEASURING ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE TO DETERMINE THE MISSILE'S *ALTITUDE*.

IF I CAN CREATE A *MAGNETIC FIELD* AROUND THE MISSILE--AND *INCREASE* THAT FIELD'S *PRESSURE*--

--I CAN GET THE ENGINE TO *SHUT DOWN* PREMATURELY--

--GOD-- THIS THING'S *BIG*--

--GONNA LOSE IT.

SCREWING UP--

--NO GOOD--THE MISSILE'S PICKING UP SPEED--CAN'T-- CAN'T KEEP UP--

--NOT *STRONG* ENOUGH--

--WAIT A SEC-- MAYBE I *DON'T HAVE TO!*

DIDN'T I READ SOMEWHERE THAT *ROCKET EXHAUST*--

--IS *IONIZED GAS*--?

TRAPPED SOME *OXYGEN* INSIDE MY PERSONAL *FORCE FIELD*. THIS *INFERNO* OF *IONS* SHOULD ACT LIKE A *SUPER-CONDUCTOR*--

--GIVING ME THE *POWER* I NEED!

NOW--JUST *CRANK* THE ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE INSIDE THE FIELD AROUND THE MISSILE--

--AND I SHOULD TRICK THE ON-BOARD COMPUTER INTO THINKING IT'S REACHED THE *OUTOSPHERE*-- GET IT TO RELEASE THE WARHEAD--

GGHAAAAHHHH!!!

--OR--

--THE *THIRD STAGE*--

SCREWING UP.

REALLY IN TROUBLE, HERE.

CAN'T CATCH IT.

NOT EVEN SURE *WHERE* IT'S HEADED--!

KLIK

GOTTA *WARN* THEM --LET THEM KNOW IT GOT AWAY FROM ME--

--AND RESET THIS *UNIFORM*--

--J'ONN-- IT'S *TRIUMPH*. *EMERGENCY* --!

STAND BY, TRIUMPH.

J'ONN--

STAND BY.

DAMN.

J'ONN'S IN ONE OF HIS "*I AM AN ENIGMA*" MOOD SWINGS.

ON MY *OWN*--

--SCARED OUT OF MY *MIND*.

WHAT THE *HELL* COULD BE SO IMPORTANT J'ONN CAN'T ANSWER ME--?!

GODWAR
THE VILLAGE SQUARE AT VLANDAR.
QUANTUM'S SAVAGE HORDE HAS COME TO DEAL DEATH.
THEY WILL DISCOVER MORE THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR.
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7

HEY-- SISTER--

--YOU HANDLE ONE OF THESE?

I'LL GIVE IT A SHOT.

KLICK

YEEARGH!

AAIIEE!

ARGH!

WITCH--!!

WHUD!

THAT'S MISS WITCH --IF YOU'RE NASTY.

THE HELL WITH THIS.

I'M OFF THE CLOCK HERE!!

DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR THIS CRAP, J'ONN--!

DON'T TALK THEM TO DEATH!

SWING THOSE SWORDS!

--ARRRGGGHH!!

SSZZZAAACCKKK!!

MORGAN, MORGAN, MORGAN.

YOU NEVER DO LEARN, DO YOU?

THE LORD OF CHAOS CANNOT BE DISPATCHED BY THE LIKES OF YOU!!

WITNESS THE POWER-- THE GLORY-- THE ULTIMATE VICTORY OF--

--QUANTUM, SORCERER SUPREME--!!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

OKAY.

WAS WONDERING WHEN YOU'D GET INTO IT.

--UUKKK--!!

KERRAAASH!

IF I DIE--

--HE DIES.

THEN HE DIES.

NO FOOLING YOU, IS THERE, GREEN GOD?

MEANWHILE, A HUNDRED LEAGUES EAST...

...oh MAN...

...FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN... SLIMED. SO STIFF--

WELL THEN, I SUPPOSE OUR CONTEST NEED CONTINUE.

AND WHAT BETTER PLACE THAN MY TRUE OBJECTIVE HERE IN THIS PITIFUL VILLAGE--

--THE VAULT OF THE ANCIENT ONES!!

MAN... HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN OUT?

LAST THING I REMEMBER IS BLESSING SOME BABY-- TALKING TO THAT OLD QUANTUM GUY--

-- HOPING TO STOP THE FIGHTING-- ALL THAT KILLING.

NEXT, I WAS DREAMING ABOUT TORI SPELLING... AGAIN...

TIRED. TIRED OF FIGHTING. TIRED OF FACING ONE THREAT AFTER ANOTHER...

--HELLO.

VLANDAR--

THEY JUST *KEEP COMING*, DON'T THEY?

NEVER TELL ME THE ODDS, *GAMMERON.*

YOU *LIVE* LONGER THAT WAY.

WHERE'S YOUR *GIRL-FRIEND?*

GYPSY IS NOT MY GIRLFRIEND, MORGAN, OR MY *TEAMMATE.*

I'M A *BOUNTY HUNTER*-- CAUGHT UP IN *THIS* SILLINESS.

GYPSY HAS *CHAMELEON* POWERS--SHE'S ABLE TO *BLEND IN* WITH HER SURROUNDINGS.

I DON'T *KNOW* HER VERY WELL, BUT MY IM-PRESSION IS--

"--SHE CAN *HOLD UP* HER END!"

THIS IS GETTING PRETTY *HAIRY*, GUYS.

WITH ALL OF OUR *BIG GUNS* OFF HAVING *COFFEE* OR SOMETHING--

Y-- YURRRKK--!!

--WE *MAY* WANT TO CONSIDER A *STRATEGIC WITHDRAWAL--!*

THWAACK!

YOU WITHDRAW.

I, ON THE OTHER HAND, WOULD MUCH RATHER *DANCE* ON QUANTUM'S *GRAVE*.

THAT'S PROBABLY NOT LIKELY RIGHT NOW, MORGAN.

I THINK YOUR BOY QUANTUM HAS *BORROWED* THE RAY'S BODY--

"--AND *J'ONN'S* NOT *ABOUT* TO LET ANYTHING HARM ONE OF HIS *KIDS*--"

TRIUMPH--*STATUS REPORT*--?

NOT GOOD, J'ONN--

--I GOT *NAILED* BY THE ROCKET'S THIRD STAGE. FAR AS I CAN TELL, IT'S PROBABLY REACHED *SECOND STAGE* SEPARATION.

IT'LL LAUNCH ITS WARHEAD *ANY SECOND* NOW.

WILL--THERE IS A *SIMPLE METHOD* TO FINDING THE *MISSILE*--

--FLY TOWARDS THE *SUN*.

AS I UNDERSTAND IT, SKARTARIS' SUN IS *NOT* A STAR AT THE CENTER OF A SOLAR SYSTEM--

--BUT A BALL OF FLAME SUSPENDED HIGH ABOVE SEA LEVEL AT THE NEXUS OF THE PLANET'S MAGNETIC POLES.

SKARTARIS EXISTS WITHIN A HOLLOW WORLD, IT'S PERPETUAL LIGHT DUE TO THIS ANOMALY HELD AT THE CENTER OF THE PLANET'S MAGNETIC FIELD.

IF YOU CONCENTRATE, AS YOU APPROACH THE "SUN," THE PLANTARY MAGNETIC WILL BECOME VIVIDLY CLEAR TO YOU.

YES--YES, I'M GETTING IT NOW--

--HERE AT THE *CENTER* OF THE WORLD, THE PLANET'S MAGNETIC FIELD IS AT ITS *MOST POWERFUL*--

--I AM AT *MY* MOST POWERFUL!!

I CAN "*FEEL* THE MAGNETIC PULSES-- AND I CAN FEEL OBJECTS *CUTTING ACROSS* THE PLANET'S MAGNETIC LINES--

--THERE!!!

--GOT IT!!

--BUT-- I'M *TOO LATE*-- IT'S LAUNCHING--

THE WARHEAD !!!

THREE OF THEM.

THERE ARE *THREE* WARHEADS, J'ONN--ALL HEADED IN *DIFFERENT* DIRECTIONS--!!

THEY ARE *MULTIPLE IMPACT REENTRY VEHICLES*, WILL. INDEPENDENTLY TARGETED.

EACH WITH ONE HUNDRED TIMES THE POWER OF THE BOMB THAT LEVELED HIROSHIMA!

MY GOD-- WHAT LUNATIC THOUGHT THESE THINGS UP?!

IRRELEVANT. TARGET A WIDE-DISPERSION ZERO-GRAVITATIONAL FIELD AND *EXECUTE*.

--DAMN!

J'ONN-- ONE GOT AWAY!

MEANWHILE, AT QUANTUM'S CAMP...

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME! THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME! THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME!

MY *POWERS* ARE GONE-- I'M *OLD*--

--AND *DINO FLINTROCK* IS TRYING TO *EAT* ME!!

WELL NOW, LET'S JUST *TRY* TO IMAGINE HOW THINGS COULD BE *WORSE*!!

--OKAY. YEP. THAT'LL WORK.

CAN'T *BELIEVE* I LET THAT *QUANTUM* GUY *PLAY* ME LIKE THAT!! I MEAN-- I *CAME* HERE TO *SAVE* HIM--

--TO *SAVE* THE LIVES OF HIS *PEOPLE!!* AND HE DOES *THIS!!*

CAN'T--CAN'T *RUN* IN THIS BODY--GOTTA-- GOTTA TRY SOMETHING *DESPERATE*--

GLACK

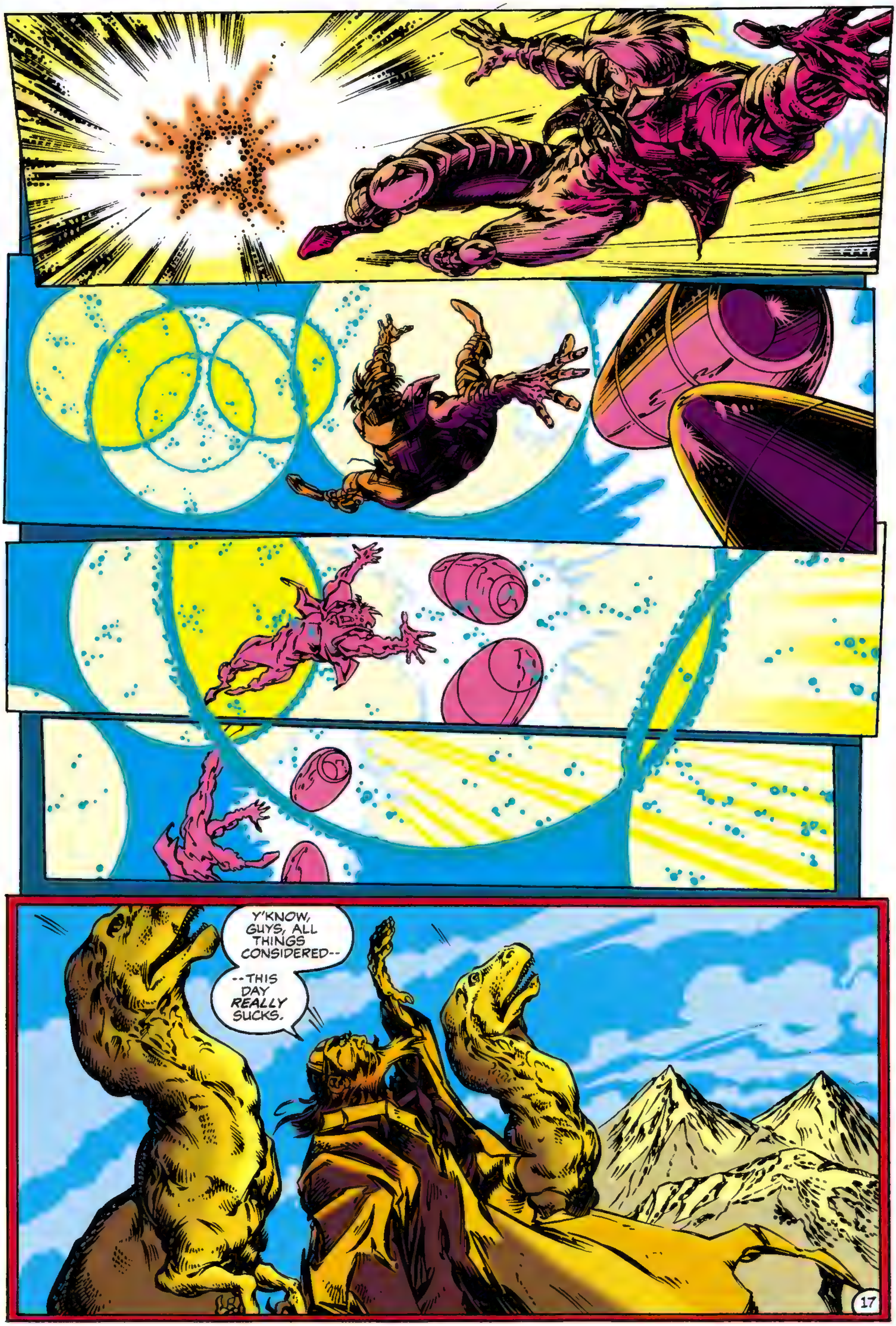
SIT!

WELL--WHADDA-YA KNOW--

JUST A LITTLE CLOSER--

C'MON... C'MON... *MOVE--!*

--oh no--


Y'KNOW, GUYS, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED--
--THIS DAY *REALLY* SUCKS.

AND NOW, GREEN GOD--!

--DIE!!

ONCE I DISPOSE OF YOU, YOUR PITIFUL *REGENTS* SHALL SOON FALL!

THEN SHALL THOSE SNIVELING *FARMERS!*

AND SO THE *VAULT* OF THE *ANCIENT ONES* SHALL BE *MINE* EVER-MORE--!!

--UURRKKK--!!

JUST AS I SUSPECTED. YOU *USED* US.

USED YOUR *SORCERY* AND *TECHNOLOGY* TO *GUIDE* OUR STRICKEN VESSEL--

--*DRIVING* IT INTO THE GROUND TO KILL THE FARMER'S CHAMPION!

SSZZZ-

AAAGKK!

--WHRR-- WHAT ARE YOU--?!

I'M *MELDING* MY MIND WITH RAY'S--FORCING HIM--

--TO *SHIFT* BACK TO *MATTER*. NOW, QUANTUM, RETURN MY STUDENT OR *DIE*.

LIAR! YOU WOULD NOT *SLAY* YOUR *FRIEND!*

NO, BUT *HE* WOULD--

CURSES UPON YOU, GREEN GOD!!

CURSES UPON MORGAN THE WARLORD!

THE DAY OF MY VENGEANCE DRAWS NIGH!

YAAA

-- PROBABLY AN *EARLY PROTOTYPE* FIRED IN A *TEST LAUNCH* AND PRESUMED *LOST AT SEA*. IT PIERCED A DIMENSIONAL PORTAL AND SOFT-LANDED HERE IN SKARTARIS.

THE PEASANT FARMERS CLAIMED IT AS A *RELIGIOUS TALISMAN*.

NO--NO-- THE *FUEL*--THE *LAUNCH CODES* AND *KEYS*--

IMPROVISED FROM *ADVANCED ATLANTEAN TECHNOLOGY*--

-- AND *MAGIC*. MAGIC IS *QUITE REAL* HERE, PEOPLE. THE LINE BETWEEN SORCERY AND TECHNOLOGY IS BLURRED TO INSIGNIFICANCE.

FOR ALL WE KNOW, EBALLUM LOOKED UP THE INFO WITH A *CRYSTAL BALL*.

WAIT-- I STILL DON'T GET IT--

--THAT WARHEAD EXPLODED 200 MILES AWAY--

--HOW COME WE'RE NOT *DEAD*?

DUMMY WARHEADS, RAY. BUILT TO *FLY* LIKE THE REAL THING--

--BUT *HARMLESS*.

SEZ *YOU*, BOY!

I LOADED THOSE WARHEADS WITH *TAINTED FERTILIZER*--80 BATHS* EACH!

IT'S *TOXIC*! IT'LL KILL THEIR CROPS, ANIMALS, *SOLDIERS* --ANYTHING IT TOUCHES!

THEY'LL ALL DROWN LIKE *RATS* IN THEIR OWN *VOMIT*!! *HEE-HEE--!!*

I *KILL* ME!!

WAIT-- IF I'M BACK *HERE*--THAT MEANS--

*BATH = 33.1 GALLONS

"--QUANTUM'S ABOUT TO MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS."

CURSES.

A CURSE ON THEM ALL.

DEATH TO THEM ALL, AND TO THEIR CHILDREN.

A THOUSAND DEATHS.

BY THE BLACK STAR, I SHALL RALLY MY FORCES AND WIPE THEM FROM THE FACE OF SKAR--

--SKAR--?

--SKAR--?

--SKAR--?

YEEEEE-

-AARGH!

SHORTLY, ON THE FACE OF FIRE MOUNTAIN, SOUTH OF THE FOREST OF EBONDAR...

RIGHT THROUGH HERE, PEOPLE--

--IT'S TIME YOU GOT YOURSELVES *HOME.*

MY WIFE AND I FOUND THIS PLACE BY ACCIDENT. THIS SHUTTLE--IF IT STILL *WORKS* --WILL TAKE YOU TO THE ANDES MOUNTAINS IN PERU--

--WHERE YOU'LL BE *TRAPPED* INSIDE A *MOUNTAIN.* * NOT MUCH OF A *PROBLEM* FOR *THIS* GROUP.

YOU AND YOUR WIFE ARE WELCOME TO *JOIN* US, COLONEL.

*SHAKIRA, HERE, IS MY *FRIEND,* J'ONN--

--AS ARE *YOU.* AND, AS I MENTIONED *BEFORE*--

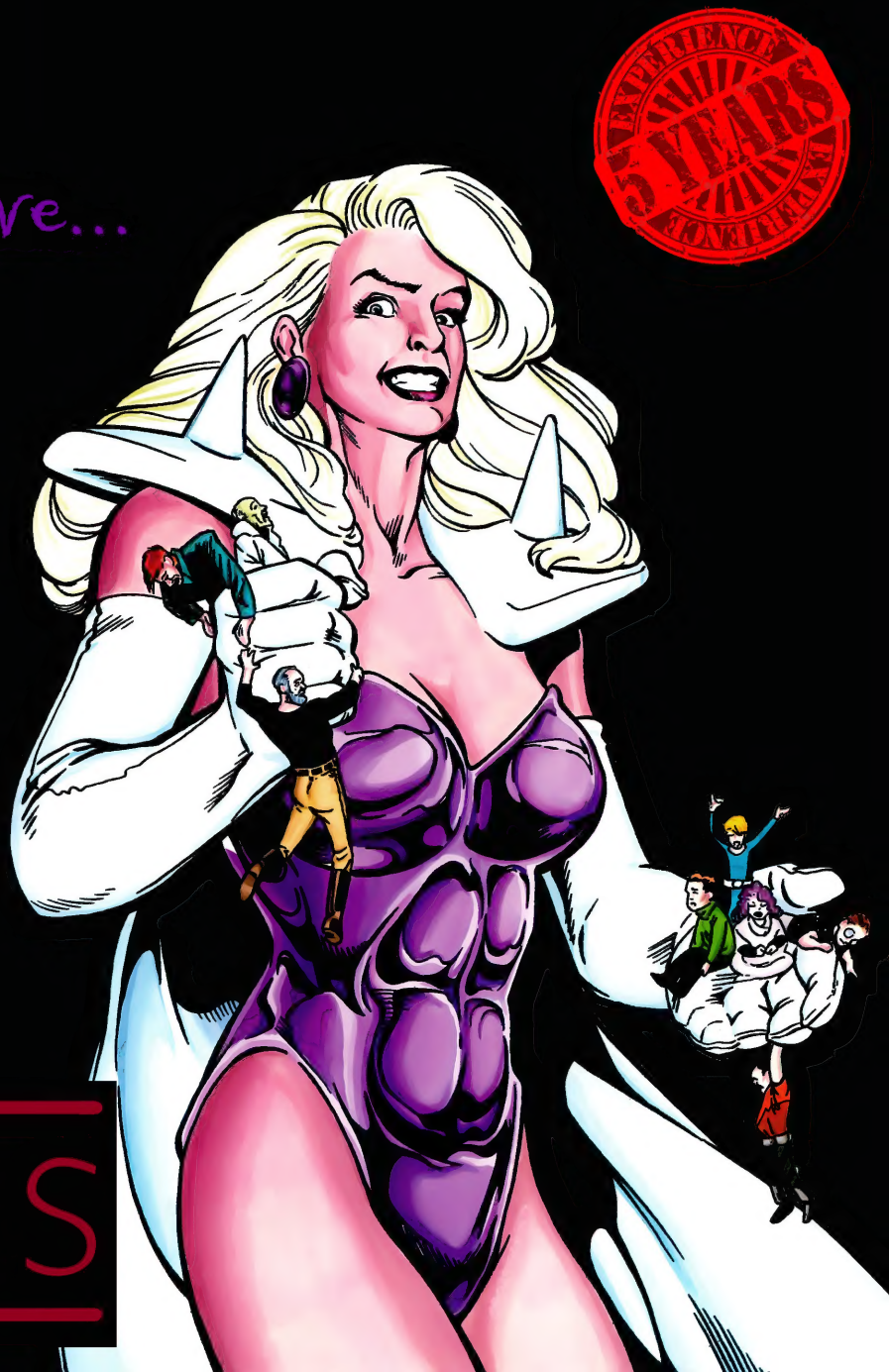
--I'M *ALREADY* HOME. GOOD LUCK TO YOU.

LIKEWISE.

*MORGAN BLEW UP THE STATION ON THE OTHER END WAY BACK IN WARLORD #6--Bob & Roo

NEXT: HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

From Baaldur, with love...



GLORITH

novus